

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

ACDA-05 ERDA-05 OES-03 IO-10 /080 W

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 381

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, NZ

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND ELECTIONS

REF: WELLINGTON 3079

1. FORMATION THIS WEEK OF "CITIZENS FOR ROWLING" COMMITTEE PROVIDED FIRST BIT OF GOOD NEWS LABOUR GOVERNMENT HAS HAD IN RECENT MONTHS. COMMITTED, DENYING NOT TOO PRESUASIVELY THAT IT HAD ANY CONNECTION WITH LABOUR PARTY, INCLUDES DIR EDMUND HILLARY; ONE PROMINENT BUSINESSMAN, SIR JACK HARRIS; AND A NUMBER OF LEFTIST LEANING EDUCATORS AND CLERGYMEN. CONVENOR IS WELL-KNOWN JOURNALIST, DAVID EXEL, WHO CLAIMED COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES WERE TO RE-ELECT ROWLING AND TO ENCOURAGE THE NATIONAL PARTY BACK INTO THE MAIN STREAM OF NEW ZEALAND PROLITICS.

2. WHILE BULK OF COMMITTEE MIGHT BE CALLED "SILK STOKING" LEFT, INCLUSION OF HILLARY AND EXEL, BOTH OF WHOM WERE AT ONE TIME IN THE PAST CONSIDERED AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POSSIBLE NATIONAL PARTY CANDIDATES, GIVES GROUP AT LEAST

SOME SEMBLANCE OF BALANCE. HOWEVER, SUGGESTIONS BY GROUP THAT ELECTION OF MULDOON WOULD ENDANGER NEW ZEALAND DEMOCRACY CLEARLY DESPLAYS HEAVY BIAS AGAINST MULDOON. REPLYING TO PRESS INQUIRIES, MULDOON SAID HE WOULD NOT ENCOURAGE FORMATION OF A SIMILAR COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT HIMSELF. HE TERMED THE "CITIZENS FOR ROWLING" GROUP "A RATHER SUPERIOR FORM OF CHARACTER ASSASSINATION".

3. MEDIA COVERAGE OF COMMITTEE SOMEWHAT SOFTENED, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, IMPACT OF PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED SEPTEMBER TRADE FIGURES WHICH SHOWED \$111 MILLION DEFICIT AND WOPED OUT HOPE THAT \$45 MILLION AUGUST DIFICIT WAS BEGINNING OF TREND TOWARD STABILIZATION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE PROBLEM. IN KEEPING WITH ELECTION EFFORTS, GOVERNMENT TRIED TO SLOUGH OFF FIGURE AS NOT UNEXPECTED, WHILE NATIONAL PARTY CITED DEFICIT AS ANOTHER INSTALLMENT IN LABOUR'S MISHANDLING OF ECONOMY.

4. SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR FREE ZONE (SPNRZ) CAME SOMEWHAT CLOSER TO BECOMING A CAMPAIGN ISSUE BETWEEN TWO MAJOR PARTIES WITH A SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER ROWLING STRESSING SUPPORT SPNFZ HAD PICKED UP AT UNITED NATIONS. BEFORE SAME FORUM USED BY ROWLING, DEPUTY LEADER OF OPPOSITION TALBOYS STRESSED THAT SPNFZ WAS LIKELY TO BE OPPOSED BY NEW ZEALAND MAJOR ALLIES AND THAT UNITED NATIONS ALONE COULD NOT BE RELIED UPON BY NEW ZEALAND FOR ITS SECURITY.

5. OTHERWISE, IT WAS GENERALLY QUIET WEEK POLITICALLY, WITH NO MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS BY EITHER PARTY. HOWEVER, BOTH NATIONAL AND LABOUR SENT OUT TEAMS OF SENIOR PERSONNEL TO STUMP MARGINAL ELECTORATES. DEPTH OF THIS EFFORT IS SEEN BY LABOUR PARTY SCHEDULE WITH CALLS FOR THREE DIFFERENT MINISTERS TO APPEAR IN DUNEDIN AREA OCTOBER 28 AND 29. THREE MORE CABINET MEMBERS WILL BE IN INVERCARGILL OCTOBER 30.
SELDEN

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